PHYLLIS.

London Truth: "A wilful woman must have her way," says the old proverb; and, as far as I can see, it says the truth. Nell St. Maur was a wilful woman, and she had her way, in spite of all my efforts to persuade her to the contrary. Whether she regretted it or not afterwards I don't know, and I don't suppose I ever shall know now, for many years have gone by since then, and it is safer to let sleeping dogs lie.

Nell was the daughter of one of my oldest friends, and I had known her all her life. Dick Trevor was the son of another old friend, and I had known him all his life, too. Sir John St. Maur and Major Trevor were near neighbors, their estates marched and their children played together in the nursery.

I can't remember how I got to know that Nell loved Dick; perhaps by instinct. But, anyway, I was sorry to know it, for I did not think him good enough for her. Not that I did not like Dick—nobody could help liking him—but somehow Nell seemed made for better things than he had to offer. I was staying down at St. Maur Court when I made the discovery, so I had plenty of opportunities of watching the progress of events, and I availed myself of them to the utmost. Dick did not know that Nell loved him, or if he knew he made no sign. He followed his roving boyish fancy whithersoever it chanced to lead him, without thought or heed for the morrow. And Nell stood aside and waited, and it sometimes a fleeting shadow dimmed the radiance of her eyes nobody knew it or understood it save only I.

It seems such a short time since the day that Phyllis Hamilton came to the Court, though really it is more years than I care to count. I remember it as if it were only yesterday, and remember, too, the look that flashed into Dick's eyes as they fell on her sparkling childish face. I had never seen that look before, and it hurt me like a knife-thrust for Nell's sake. I know that Nell saw it, too, for her face clouded a little, and presently she came over to my corner and sat down by me.

"Phyllis is very pretty, Colonel Maitland," she said.

"Yes," I replied, "she's awfully pretty Nell."

I wished I could have said she was not pretty, and I would have stretched a point to say it, if it had been possible; but really it was not possible. As she sat there in the June sunshine, with the brightness and glow of summer all about her and the magic light of youth in her shining eyes and on her laughing lips, she made such a perfect picture of warm, living lovely coloring that I could only look and admire.

A week later Dick came to me, his face alight with excitement and eager boyish hapiness.

"Congratulate me, colonel," he cried, holding out his hand, "Phyllis has promised to marry me, and I'm the luckiest chap in the world!"

I took his hand and wrung it hard, and, as I did so, the vision of Nell's sweet face and tender eyes came to my mind—the vision of all that he had missed.

"Blind!" I murmured to myself, "how blind!"

In the days that followed I, who knew, fancied that Nell looked a little paler, a little sadder, but to the world she was always just her own bright self, and nobody guessed her secret—least of all Dick and Phyllis. And they were such a happy pair, such a happy, laughing, heedless pair, more like two children playing at lovers than a man and woman about to be married. I could not help smiling as I watched them, and Nell smiled, too, and time went on.

The news came to me like a thunderbolt. It was so utterly unexpected, so utterly inexplicable, that I did not know how to believe it, though it was Dick himself who told me.

"Phyllis and I have said good-bye for ever," he told me, looking very white and determined. "Everything is over and done with, and—and—please—don't mention her name to me again, colonel."

I was so surprised that at first I only stared at him helplessly.

"Why," I asked at last, "what has happened, Dick?"

But Dick shook his head, looking whiter and more determined than ever.

"I'm not going to say any more to you or anybody," he said. "Everything is over and done with. That's enough."

I thought and thought, but I could not solve the mystery, and Nell came to me with wonder in her eyes.

"What can it be?" she asked. Can you think what it can be, Colonel Maitland?"

"No," I answered, "I wish I could."

Dick changed after that, and his face did not quite lose the white determined look that it had worn when he came to me that day. He grew graver and older, and when he laughed his laughter had a bitter ring that was new to it. Sometimes he talked with a reckless cynicism that was bad to hear, and then Nell used to look at him with wistful tenderness.

"If I could only help him," she would say to me afterwards; "if I could do something for him."

But what was there that she could do?

Time went on again, and then a second thunderbolt fell. I was smoking on the terrace one evening when Nell came to me and slipped her hand through my arm, and looked at me with a new look in her eyes.

"Dick has asked me to marry him, Colonel Maitland," she said.

My feelings were so mixed that just for the moment I did not know what to say. I put my hand over hers in perplexed silence.

"His heart is so sore," she went on. "He will never love me as he loved Phyllis, but he thinks I can give him back some of the happiness that he has lost. Poor old Dick!"

I found my voice then.

"And you," I said sharply, "have loved him all your life, Nell."

She looked at me again, startled and confused, with the hot color glowing and fading in her cheeks.

"How do you know?" she asked. "How have you guessed my secret?"

I smiled down at her.

"I am not quite blind, though I am a mere man," I answered, "and I know you so well, Nell."

She smiled back and pressed a little closer to me.

"It's a contrary world," she said, half in jest, half in sadness.

"Yes," I said, "it's a contrary world, and it always will be. And now tell me all about you and Dick."

I spoke rather sharply, for the whole affair seemed to me one-sided, and if there is anything I specially hate it is a one-sided affair.

Nell looked away.

"There seems so little to tell," she murmured. "Dick came to me to-day and asked me to marry him, and I—and I—"

"Yes!" I said. "And you?"

She turned to me again with a look that perplexed me.

"Do you know what it was that came between him and Phyllis?" she said.

"Why no," I answered, "you know I don't."

"I never knew till to-day," she said, "but he told me to-day, and I want to tell you. Do you remember—do you remember that old story?"

I started as if I had been shot.

"That old story!" I cried. "That old story! Good heavens, Nell; you don't mean to tell me that it was that?"

"Yes," she said, "it was that."

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed again. "Somebody raked it up and told it to Phyllis, I suppose?"

"Yes," Nell answered in the same grave way. "Somebody told it to Phyllis, and she believed it, and Dick—Dick—"

"Oh, Dick was too proud to explain or deny it, of course!" I cried, for I knew the boy well. "He told her that if she liked to believe it she might."

"Yes," said Nell, "and Phyllis said that he must either explain the story or give her up, and—"

"And he gave her up," I concluded. "Yes, that's Dick all over."

Nell looked at me with wide, sad eyes.

"How different women are," she said. "How strange it seems not to trust the man one loves through everything."

"You nver doubted him," I returned.

"No, never," she said, "never for a moment. I couldn't."

I sighed.

"Ah well," I said, "if all women were like you the world would be such a different place, Nell."

And then my thoughts went back to the past, and I recalled the details of the story that had served to part Dick and Phyllis. It was quite an old story, for it had happened in Dick's undergraduate days, and I had thought it was done with. I need not tell the details, but a friend of Dick's had managed to get into an awkward scrape, and Dick, with the reckless generosity that was his strongest characteristic, had taken the blame on himself, and so shielded the real culprit until he was able to escape from the consequence of his rashness. Then the truth had gradually become known, and Dicks' friends had triumphed in his innocence. Not that his friends had ever really doubted him, but every man has his enemies, and Dick was no exception to the rule. And, of course, it was an enemy who had stirred up this half-forgotten mud and flung it in the face of the woman he loved. An enemy—but who? I could not help wondering, though, after all, that it was a side issue, and in no way affected the point of the story. For the point was that someone had told the scandal to Phyllis, and she had believed it, and Dick had refused to explain or deny it, and so they had parted. So much is so little!

Nell's soft voice broke in upon my busy thoughts.

"I wonder," she said, "how I had better set about it."

I roused myself from the reverie into which I had fallen.

"How you had better set about what?" I asked.

She frowned a little.

"About reconciling Dick and Phyllis," she answered thoughtfully. "Of course, they must be brought together again, and it ought to be easy enough, but sometimes things are so difficult."

I looked at her in amazement.

"But Dick has asked you to marry him!" I said.

She frowned again.

"Yes, but I'm not going to marry him," she returned.

"But you love him," I said; "you love him, Nell."

She sighed softly.

"Yes, I love him," she said; "I love him too well to let him throw himself away on a woman he doesn't love."

I said nothing. I was puzzled and did not understand; but I am not the first man who has failed to understand a woman at the psychological moment.

"I wonder how I had better set about it?" Nell said again. "You will help me if you can, won't you, Colonel Maitland? Think of Dick—poor old Dick!"

I looked down at her uplifted face.

"I am thinking of Dick," I said, "and think it's cruel kindness to help him win a doll for his wife instead of a woman. And, then, being in a sentimental mood, quoted a verse of poetry: "With live women and men to be found in the world—

Live with sorrow and sin, live with pain and with passion—
Who could live with a doll, tho' its locks should be curled,
And its petticoats trimmed in the fashion?"

Nell shook her head, and a tremulous smile—half whimsical, half wistful, wholly tender—flashed over her.

"He likes the doll better," she said. "Let him have it."

I have made it a rule through life not to argue with women, but I broke through my rule on that occasion, and did my best to persuade Nell to my way of thinking. Of course, I did not succeed. It was all waste of time, as I might have known it would be.

Nell took her own way, after the manner of women, and somehow she brought Dick and Phyllis together, and smoothed away doubt and distrust on the one side and sentiment and wounded pride on the other, and made them lovers once more. Dick had his doll again, and he was happy; and Nell, well, perhaps, she was happy, too.

"They are only children," she said to me as we stood together on the terrace. "I am so glad I was able to help them."

My eyes followed hers, and rested on Dick and Phyllis as they wandered arm in arm across the lawn, their curly heads very near together, their careless laughter ringing through the stillness of the summer evening.

"They are only children," I answered, echoing her words, "but most of the sacrifices of the world are made for the sake of the children, Nell."

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Yes, as I said before, it was a one-sided affair, but I could not alter it, and so I had to let it be. One has to let a good many things be in this world.

SCIENTIFIC MISCELLANY.

The New Forestry—Famine Forecasting—Furnace Achievements — The Conquest of Hail Clouds—Liquid Air Explosives — Phosphorescence in a Magnetic Field—Ineffective Inoculation—A New Horn—Slate Paint.

The modern practice of the forestry schools of France and Germany is stated by Mr. John Simpson to be the checking of the latest growth of tree trunks by closely surrounding them with smaller trees. These are the advantages claimed: The general theory of the system is that thick planting at the outset, and dense culture throughout, are the first essentials in the production of good timber; that thick planting leads to the early formation of the overhead canopy, promotes growth in height and protects the soil, preserving its fertility, and keeping it more uniform in temperature and moisture than where more exposed; that density, or crowding, causes early struggle for existence, in which the trees while young lose their lower branches, becoming free from knots and more cylindrical in stems; and that the yield of timber to the acre is greater than by any other system. The European foresters consider that oak timber is at its best when the tree is 150 years old, and that elm, ash and beech reach maturity in about 125 years.

The famine-causing droughts of India are found by Mr. E. D. Archibald to have some connection with the sun-spot cycle, although with sufficient irregularity to prevent trustworthy prediction. Extensive droughts occur in the dry area of southern India at intervals of nine to twelve years, and usually, but not regularly, about a year before the sun-spot minimum. When severe, famine follows in the next year. A severe drought in the peninsula of southern India is followed by a severe drought and ensuing famine in northern India in about five cases in seven; and there is also a tendency to summer droughts in northern India in years of maximum sun-spot, connected in some way with the abnormal high pressure prevailing over western Asia at such epochs.

Since 1892, Moissan has produced his electric furnace diamonds and other precious stones, graphite, chromium, maganese, uranium, vanadium, zirconium, silicium, aluminum, etc. He hopes soon to obtain pure iron, which does not yet exist, and which he supposes to be silver-white, flexible and strong.

Tests of liquid air for blasting, begun at a German colliery about three years ago, are being systematically continued at one of the largest factories for explosives in Europe. The explosive compound is formed by adding some carbonaceous substance, and many different mixtures have been studied, some of them proving very dangerous on account of high inflammability and too sudden detonation. Good results have been lately obtained with equal parts of paraffin and charcoal, the filled cartridge being soaked in liquid air or having the liquid poured into the wrapper. In practical mining, a probable method would be to take a tank of liquid air to the working place, and then deposit in it a wire basket of cartridges, allowing these to remain until the moment of using. Complete soaking requires about ten minutes. A cartridge 8 inches long by 2¾ inches in diameter weighs 11¾ ounces when filled with a mixture of kieselguhr; tar and tar oil, and it absorbs 2¾ ounces of liquid air. So rapid is the deterioration that it would be necessary to use a cartridge of this size within fifteen minutes after removal from the vital fluid. With carbon materials of the petroleum variety and highly-oxygenated liquid air, it is possible to obtain an explosive compound of greater strength than blasting gelatine, but safer mixtures are less strong.

If phosphorescence is due to vibration of material particles, it would seem that magnetism might affect it. Taking long tubes of sulphide of lime, sulphide of zinc, nitrate of uranium, and other more or less phosphorescent substances, Mr. Alexandre de Hamptinne has placed a portion of their strength under the influence of powerful magnets, but in no case could any influence upon the phosphorescence be detected. The tubes remained uniformly lighted in the dark, the brightness gradually and uniformly lessening.

Serum treatment for drunkenness is no new thing. Dr. Crevally, of Sydney, has tested it for two years, inoculating with serum from a long-intoxicated calf, and has been forced to conclude that the lessening of the appetite for liquor noted for two or three days is due entirely to imagination. Inoculations with water had the same temporary effect.

The roadside trees about Salem, southern India, are mostly tamarins, whose fruit is sold, but whose scanty shade is said to be so harmful that cattle never seek it and vegetation dies in it.

The progress made up to July in keeping hail from crops by cannon-firing has been reported by V. Vermorel, of Villefranche. A special form of cannon is used, and trigonometric measurement shows that the atmospheric whirl set up by its discharge may reach a height of more than a mile. The commotion produced in the clouds transforms the hail into rain. In experience in the Rhone Valley, it has been found that each gun protects about sixty acres, the cost of the station being a little less than $1 per acre, and the annual expense of maintenance—allowing for 600 shots—about sixty-five cents per acre. Prompt and concerted action is ensured by a code of signals. The confidence felt in the system is indicated by the fact that 15,000 shooting stations have been already established in Italy, while insurance companies have reduced their premiums 33 per cent in protected districts.

Hardened casein, more or less opaque, has long been used as a substitute for horn and similar materials. To make a clear solution that dries into a transparent horny substance, A. Spitteler, of Prien, Bavaria, swells the finely divided dry casein in three or four times its weight of water, and then adds about one-tenth as much caustic soda in the form of a five per cent solution. On standing a couple of hours, the jelly at first formed separates into a clear liquid and a sediment, and the liquid must be decanted or siphoned off.

This method of producing artificial slate is given by a German authority: Solid potash, water glass and soda water glass, one part of each, are finely powdered in a mortar, and boiled ninety minutes in twelve parts of soft water, when they are completely dissolved. A pulp is then made by grinding seven parts of natural slate with one part of lampblack. This is added to the water glass solution, and the rather thick mass is brushed upon tin plates, previously roughened with sandstone.

The curious fact has been noticed that in hundreds of photographs of athletes, taken at the instant of victory, only one shows a pleasant expression.

Old Tennessee Democrat on Bryanism

Boston Evening Herald: Joseph Lindauer, of Nashville, Tenn., well known in southern political circles, was questioned last night at the Touraine on the present political situation in the south. Said he: "The Democratic party to-day is an old woman dancing frantically to the music of William Jennings Bryan's pistol practice. With skirts grasped tightly and lifted high, she is hopping ungracefully up and down while Bryan cheers her on, shouting 'Dance, old lady, dance!'

"I was a Democrat, but I refused to submit to a man who is worse than an imperialist, who is an absolute dictator of his party and who, if he could, would be absolute dictator of the American people.

"Silver is not the most damnable thing about the platform on which Bryan stands. The clause, 'We are opposed to the law by injunction,' means anarchism and riot."

Sam Jones' Rhetoric.

Preachers ain't got no wings. I've slept with them. I've seen them with their coats off.

A first class preacher should be a mixture between a billy goat and a mule. He could butt with one end and kick with the other.

I wouldn't care if the whole world thought I was a hypocrite, just so long as God and Sam Jones thought I wasn't.

SOME GOOD STORIES OF FAMOUS WRITERS.

An Impressive Lesson.

A sister of the late E. P. Roe tells an amusing story of the first lesson which she and her brother ever received in Roman history, says the Youth's Companion.

Among our most loved and honored guests, during our childhood, was Dr. Samuel Cox, for many years a prominent clergyman in New York. At times our conversation turned on history, and I remember, on one occasion, he asked Edward and me if we could give him the names of the First Roman Triumvirate.

At this period of our existence the name "Caesar" was associated exclusively with an old colored man, whom we often visited, and who lived upon a lonely road in the neighborhood. We were vastly astonished, therefore, to learn that the name had ever been borne by a more illustrious person than our dusky friend; but we listened entranced to the story of the rivalries of Caesar and Pompey for the empire of the world.

Unhappily the good doctor could not remember the name of the third triumvir, and the lack troubled him greatly. That night, about 2 o'clock, I was startled by a loud knock on my bedroom door, and Dr. Cox called out:

"I replied that I was—as indeed was every one else in the house by that time.

"It's Crassus," said the doctor, and then he returned to his room, greatly relieved.

Neither Edward nor I ever forgot that first lesson in Roman history.

Kipling Was Hungry.

Here is an amusing story which is told of Kipling by Cecil Rhodes, says a writer in Mainly About People. After the siege of Kimberley they were both staying at a beautiful little Dutch farm, the home of one of Mr. Rhodes' managers. One morning early the flag was hauled down from the flagstaff, probably by some rebels, and the manager was so afraid lest Rhodes' keen eye should notice it, that he hurriedly begged the privilege of showing him round the fruit farms before breakfast. Mr. Kipling, who was in a dreamy mood, stayed behind. But dreaminess presently gave place to hunger as time went on, the flag was hoisted, and Mr. Rhodes did not appear. On their way home Mr. Rhodes and the manager were surprised to come across, on every tree they passed, big placards bearing in bold, black letters, such sentences as "Famine; We are Starving; Feed Us," and this sort of thing went on until they got to the front door, where they found written in still more startling type:

For the Human Race.
Breakfast.
Purifies the Mind—Invigorates the System. It has Sustained Thousands; It will Susutain You. See that You Get It.

And inside, on every available wall and door there were placards getting stronger until they came to, "Why Die When a Little Breakfast Prolongs Life?" "It is Late." "It is Still Later." Until at last they came to the little room where Kipling sat waiting for his breakfast, innocent, but hungry. It was, of course, the characteristic work of the author of "Stalky & Co."

Stories of Mark Twain.

Mark Twain, like many other notabilities, has been assailed with the question of what books have influenced him, says the Golden Penny Magazine, and to one inquirer he replied with characteristic courtesy and humor: "The books that have most influenced my life? With pleasure. This is the list: 'Innocence Abroad,' 'Roughing It,' 'Huckleberry Finn,' 'Prince and Pauper,' 'Tom Sawyer,' 'Yankee at the Court of King Arthur,' 'Personal Reminiscences of Joan of Arc,' 'Pudd'nhead Wilson,' 'Following the Equator,' and the publications of the late firm of Charles L. Webster & Co."

Another correspondent, who was evidently anxious that the books which had influenced Mark should influence her, wrote requesting him to send her some of his books for sale at a church bazar. Clemens complied with her request, and instructed his publishers in the following terms: "Please charge £2 against me, and for the same send me several of my books, making a discount to me that will make the £2 go as far as possible, for the cause is a pious one. Don't send the books to me. Send them to Mrs. ——, Birmingham. I don't know the lady, but she applied to me on behalf of her husband's church. Going to hold a church fair there, and wants some of my books to sell to the godly. I have asured her that the same shall be done, I being rather down on the godly, though I did not tell her that." Nor in his distress does his humor forsake him. When the reporters circulated the story that Mark Twain was dying in poverty in London, he observed gravely, "Yes, I am dying—of course, I am dying. But I do not know that I am going to do it faster than anybody else."

An Editor's Dramatic Entrance.

That a widely known editor, even though the father of a still more famous son, is sometimes caught off his guard, was shown at a recent meeting in Philadelphia, says a writer in the Saturday Evening Post.

It was a great mass meeting at one of the theatres. Every seat was occupied, and crowds besieged the entrances. So turbulent was the crowd even at the stage door that it was locked on the inside. The messenger boys for the newspapers were let out and in through a window of the green room. The boys had to climb a high picket fence, jump down into an enclosure, clamber up on a window sill, and then, when the window was opened, drop down to the floor inside.

One of the boys had just been admitted. But before the window could be closed there loomed up, on the high sill, the form of a man. He was well dressed and of distinguished appearance. He had scaled the pointed iron pickets at the imminent risk of body and raiment, had clambered to the sill, and stood there, poised like a bird about to flutter down from a tree branch. His knees were crooked for the spring.

"Hello, there! Go back, you!" cried a policeman.

A shade of pained annoyance came over the climber's face.

"My good man, I'm Mr. ——"

"Don't care! Can't come in; go back!"

The man became a trifle embarrassed, but persistently held his place. Still keeping his knees crooked in their bird-like position, he fumbled in his pocket and drew forth a card.

"I'm a newspaper man. See! Here's my police card!"

The policeman became tolerantly suave at once, and the man dropped to the floor, straightened out his coat and cuffs, and walked smilingly to the stage. It was Mr. Clarke Davis, editor of the Philadelphia Public Ledger, and the father of Mr. Richard Harding Davis.

Ruskin on the Locomotive.

The following description of a locomotive from Ruskin's pen is a beautiful piece of word painting, says the Chicago Journal:

"I cannot express the amazed awe, the crushed humanity, with which I sometimes watch a locomotive take its breath at a railroad station, and think what work there is in its bars and wheels, and what manner of men they must be who dig brown ironstone out of the ground and forge it into that! What assemblance of accurate and mighty faculties in them; more than fleshy power over melting crag and coiled fire, fettered and finesses at last into the precision of watchmaking; Titanian hammer strikes, beating out of lava these glittering cylinders and timely respondent valves and fine ribbed rods, which touch each other as a serpent writhes in noiseless gliding and omnipotence of grasp; infinitely complex, anatomy of active steel, compared with which the skeleton of a living creature would seem to a careless observer clumsy and vile—a mere morbid secretion and phosphatous prop of flesh!

"What would the men who thought out this, who beat it out, who touched it into its polished calm of power, who set it to its appointed task and triumphantly saw it fulfill its task to the utmost of their will, feel or think about this weak hand of mine, timidly leading a little stream of water color which I cannot manage into an imperfect shadow of something else—mere failure in every motion and endless disappointment? What, I repeat, would these iron dominant genii think of me, and what ought I to think of them?"

Max O'Rell's New Novel.

To the shrewd observer, competent craftsman and witty raconteur like Max O'Rell it probably looked an easy task indeed to write a novel, says a writer in the Saturday Evening Post. It is more than likely that he has changed his mind; or at least has come to realize that it is harder to write a good novel than to write one such as "Woman and Artist."

The story is, of course, developed with intelligence; and a sparkle of epigram cannot but show, once in a great while, on the pages which have passed under Max O'Rell's pen. But the characters have about the flexibility of clothes-pins, the vital warmth of puppets worked on wires. If they were a little more real, the folly of their actions would be exasperating; but, as it is, no reader will blame them for anything they do. The whole performance is commonplace, dull (how did Max O'Rell achieve dullness?) mechanical, and lacking in psycological perception. It is manifestly written for the trade. Fortunately the author's reputation is quite too well established to suffer any serious jar from a failure in a field not his own.

No Joke in That.

Brooklyn Life: "You Americans," said the London young man, as he stopped sucking his cane, "are always insinuating that we Englishmen don't know what a real joke is. Now, just hold your sides while I go over this one which I read in a home paper a week ago:

"'The countess—M'lord, you were at the grand dinner last night, were you not? Just a while ago I heard one of those vulgar Americans make the remark that this morning you had a big head.

"'The duke—But, m'lady, there's nothing in it.'"

The American looked as sober as a criminal court judge.

"Well?" he asked.

"Don't you see," explained the disgusted Britisher, poking the other in the ribs with his cane, "the countess says some one accused her companion (ha!) of having a big head (ha! ha!), and he declares (p-ah! ha!) there's nothing in it!"

"Yes, but——"

"Blarsted idioey, but what?"

"Her companion was a duke."

"Yes."

"And not any different from the rest of the English nobility?"

"No. But the joke, the joke! It is so adroitly put. In apparent inadvertence" (desperately) "the duke admits there is nothing in his head! Now, do you see?"

"Well, it's a little strange that the duke could make such a frank and candid admission, but—where does the joke come in?"

A Wonderful Young Man.

Boston Evening Record: James Walsh, member of the stock exchange of Cripple Creek, is forty-eight years of age, was a grandfather three years ago and smokes at least forty cigars every day.